



Salinas Union High School District

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Fernando R. Elizondo, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

March 21, 2000

Mr. Joe C. Tacker, Foreman  
1999 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury  
P.O. Box 414  
Salinas, CA 93902

Dear Foreman Tacker:

This is the Salinas Union High School District's response to the final report of the 1999 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Report that was submitted to presiding Judge of the Coordinated Trial Courts of Monterey County. The four recommendations outlined in the report are as follows:

- 1) School Board members and Superintendents use STAR results to evaluate assignment of personnel;
- 2) Hiring practices ensure that certified certificated teachers are placed in the classroom while it is recognized not every excellent teacher is fully certificated. It is counter productive to have a high percentage not fully certified;
- 3) School Board members search their collective conscious to determine if school funds should be better spent on students rather than on individuals performing what is a public service;
- 4) Each school district ensure that programs in place to help prevent school crime and vandalism are monitored. Those found guilty of crimes be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Recommendation:

- 1) **School Board members and Superintendent use STAR results to evaluate assignment of personnel.**

Salinas Union High School District does not nor can it use STAR results to evaluate assignment of personnel. The California Education Code specifically delineates the parameters that can be utilized in evaluating certificated personnel.

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The provisions under the California Education Code translated into our own district Board Policies and Administrative Regulations are what are utilized for assignment of personnel. I have included for the Grand Jury's review copies of our district's agreement between Salinas Valley Federation of Teachers, Article 14, Evaluation Procedures.

- 2) **Hiring practices ensure that certificated teachers are placed in the classroom while it is recognized not every excellent teacher is fully certificated, it is counter productive to have a high percentage not fully certificated.**

All teachers in the Salinas Union High School District are certificated at one level or another. The district agrees with the Grand Jury report that not every excellent teacher is fully certificated and our district makes our every effort to find fully credentialed certificated teachers. The California Education Code and the Commission on Teacher Preparation which certifies teachers allows districts various levels of certification to teach in California public schools.

The Grand Jury report is correct as its findings collaborate that there is a lack of fully credentialed certificated teachers in the State. The problem of full certification is amplified through certain subject areas at the secondary level. Those subject areas are inclusive of Mathematics, Science, Special Education and bilingual certificated teachers. Our district during the 1999-2000 school year is participating with CSUMB on the Las Alianzas Project. This project provides funds in identifying potential teachers within our present student population. This is completed through the creation of teacher clubs on our high school campuses. These clubs are comprised of youngsters that have made an initial commitment to enter into a teaching career. The project supports these youngsters in post-secondary education whether it be community college or other institutions with scholarship stipends. The stipends in part help support the students in completing their education and entering into the teaching profession.

We also work closely with CSUMB in recruiting student and placing student teachers in the Salinas Union High School District. Lastly, we work closely within the Bi-National Program, which we employ teachers from Mexico to teach in our schools for a minimum of one year. This program has been ongoing for several years and helps meet the need for bilingual teachers.

Our recruiting efforts last year, as well as this year, have incorporated 39 recruiting fairs where principals and Human Resources personnel actively participate and recruit teachers. We also have a Web page where on-line

applications and inquiries can be viewed regarding employment opportunities in our district. That Website is [www.salinas.k12.ca.us](http://www.salinas.k12.ca.us).

Recommendation #3:

**School Board members search their collective conscience to determine if school funds should be better spent on students rather than on individuals performing what is a public service.**

The Salinas Union High School Board of Trustees received a stipend as per allowed by Ed. Code for scheduled Board meetings. The benefit cost to those monthly stipends are required and subject to Social Security and Workman's Compensation charges. Also, as per Board Policy, Trustees receive Health and Welfare benefits, as do retired Trustees as per Board Policy through the age of 65. The Board also, through Board Policy, has allocated in the 1999-2000 school year \$15,000 which is less than 1% of the district's overall budget to attend workshops and seminars through the California Association of School Boards. The participation in these workshops is critical as the 1999-2000 school year has three new Board members to the district's Governing Board. It is critical that these Board members receive appropriate training through their state-wide association as to make them effective Board members. As Board members overseeing and responsible for a \$75 million dollar district budget, it is critical that they are kept in tune with the various factors that effect not only the district's fiscal solvency but also state-wide curriculum and accountability measures. Governing Board members who do not participate and remain current in these training activities will curtail their full potential as knowledgeable Governing Board members.

The Grand Jury Report outlined an expenditure for the school district of \$104,378 and identified the district's average daily attendance as 11,778 for a cost per pupil of \$8.86. In reviewing our closing budget the cost should be amended as follows: school board costs for salaries, benefits, supplies and services is \$106,982.26.

The average daily attendance should be corrected as per the official second period attendance report for 1998-1999 of 13,658. That then results of a cost per student of \$7.83, which is below the Grand Jury figure of \$8.86 or a 11.6 percent decrease.

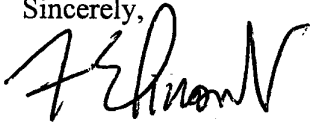
- 3) **Each school district insures that there are programs in place to help prevent school crime and vandalism are monitored. Those found guilty of crimes be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.**

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The Salinas Union High School District has a very strong program at both the District and Site levels. When youngsters are found to have caused vandalism they are asked to pay retribution. Case in point is the young man who broke into Salinas High School several years ago. The Board directed me as Superintendent to monitor his court case and to provide the court a Victim's Statement. This Victim's Statement was received positively and was utilized in the final sentencing of the youngster which included retribution as well as community service.

Our District has also embarked in a unique program where School Resource Officer and a full-time Probation Officer are placed on our high school campuses. This has assisted our campus security as well as assisted the Salinas Police Department in possible identification of other crimes in the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F. Elizondo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fernando R. Elizondo  
Superintendent

FRE:pvc